

Research Activity Panel Meeting Summary
Chris Harrold, Monterey Bay Aquarium, RAP Chair

AUGUST 2002 RAP MEETING

Host: Elkhorn Slough National Estuarine Research Reserve
Friday, August 9, 2002 9am-12pm

In Attendance:

Members

Chris Harrold, Monterey Bay Aquarium – Chair
Jeff Paduan, Naval Postgraduate School – Vice Chair
Andrew DeVogelaere – RAP Coordinator
Mark Carr, UCSC
George Somero, Hopkins
Charles Paull, MBARI
Jan Roletto, GFNMS/CBNMS
Kerstin Wasson, ESNERR
Caroline Pomeroy, UCSC
Gary Sharp, CCORS

Guests

Erica Burton, MBNMS
Kelly Newton, MBNMS
Steve Lonhart, SIMoN
Lydia Bergen, UCSC
Eric VanDyke, ESNERR
Kevin, ESNERR
Greg, ESNERR

PRESENTATIONS

Institutional Update: Elkhorn Slough National Estuarine Research Reserve (Kerstin Wasson)

The mission of the Elkhorn Slough National Estuarine Research Reserve (ESNERR) is conservation of estuarine ecosystems. There are several monitoring programs that take place on the reserve. Some of these programs were initiated by Reserve staff, and others by the National Estuarine Research Reserve Program. Reserve sponsored monitoring projects include benthic invertebrate, rookery, nest boxes, land use, and habitat change. NERR system wide monitoring includes water quality, nutrients, chlorophyll, and weather. This information is collected consistently at all 25 NERR's nation wide. Estuarine invasions are also monitored to compare

the impacts of the same invader at different estuaries, and to correlate estuarine attributes with invasion success.

There are many threats to the estuarine ecosystem including hydrological manipulations and exotic species invasions. Hydrological manipulations are caused by the dyking and draining of the wetlands. These manipulations cause habitat loss and alteration. There has been a 70% loss of salt marsh on the Reserve due to dyking at the railroad tracks. The dyke was eventually removed in 1983. There has been an increase of tidal flow in the slough due to the artificial mouth. In 1854 the mouth of the slough was to the north of the main channel. The Army created the artificial opening in line with the main channel of the slough. Bank erosion is measured at 20 station throughout the slough. The bank is eroding at a rate of 40 cm per year, with the highest rates of loss in the mid and upper slough. There has also been an increase in tidal creeks over time. GIS is used to map the loss of the bank and the increase in tidal creeks.

SAC Meeting Update / Management Plan Priorities (Chris Harrold)

Chris updated the RAP on the recent Management Plan priority issues. Table 4.1, Summary of proposed priority issues, along with the SAC Actions from the August meeting regarding the table was distributed to RAP members. Any comments on the priorities should be sent to Chris. The RAP discussed writing a letter to encourage institutional permits. Chris and Jeff will draft a letter to be sent to the Sanctuary office. For more information, contact Chris Harrold, charrold@mbayaq.org

DISCUSSIONS

Sanctuary Currents Symposium 2003 Theme (Kelly Newton)

Kelly reported that the planning committee decided to base the theme of the symposium around the management plan review. She requested 3 topics / speakers that would be interesting to the public. It was decided that there should be paired talks one management issue one research based. The talks should be 15-20 minutes with 10 minutes for discussion. The three ideas chosen are water quality, coastal armoring, and invasive species. The RAP's ideas will be presented to the planning committee, and Kelly will give an update after the next planning meeting.

INFORMATION ITEMS

Vice Admiral Lautenbacher, Under Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere, Visits the Monterey Bay Area (Andrew DeVogelaere)

Vice Admiral Lautenbacher is visited the NMFS Santa Cruz lab on Friday August 9, 2002. The Vice Admiral met with several fishing representative before a NOAA all hands luncheon. After lunch there was a presentation and briefing by various NOAA office representatives including Churchill Grimes, Bill Douros, and Becky Christensen.

SIMoN Update (Andrew DeVogelaere)

Steve Lonhart has been hired as the SIMoN Scientist. Andrew will take the role of Acting Director until the position announcement is re-released. The SIMoN Science Committee will be meeting in the near future to develop the next round of RFP's. A brochure is in the works that will summarize SIMoN to provide additional information to the public.

Biogeographic Assessment and Ecological Linkages Report Update (Steve Lonhart)

Comments from RAP members on the Biogeographic Assessment have been sent to the authors. There will be a conference call to discuss issues relating to the report. Both reports should be complete by October. The Biogeographic Assessment currently does not include invertebrates and algae, but the Sanctuary is recommending that they be included. The Ecological Linkages Report is a summary of habitats in the Sanctuary. The Sanctuary office is not impressed with the report and is suggesting major revisions.

Sanctuary 10th Anniversary Events (Kelly Newton)

This September marks the 10th anniversary of the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary. The Sanctuary and a variety of regional partners are hosting a series of events to promote ocean awareness and conservation of the rich coastal ecosystem of central California.

Saturday, September 7, 2002 – 10th Anniversary Celebration in San Simeon

Guided kayaking trips, beach barbeque at Hearst Memorial State Beach, dedication of a new Sanctuary interpretive exhibit at the Hearst Castle Visitor Center, and dinner reception and special one-night showing of *Living Edens: Big Sur* at the National Geographic Theater. For more information, call the Sanctuary's southern office at (805) 927-2145.

Saturday September 14, 2002 – 10th Anniversary Celebration in Half Moon Bay

Celebrate the grand openings of our Half Moon Bay office and Half Moon Bay State Beach's visitor center. Fair and children's activities will be held at the beach. For more information call the Sanctuary's Half Moon Bay office at (650) 712-8909.

Friday, September 20, 2002 – Special Panel Discussion in Monterey

From 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. at the Monterey Conference Center in Monterey. Intimate panel discussion on important ocean conservation issues hosted by Leon Panetta. For more information, call the Sanctuary's Monterey office at (831) 647-4255.

Saturday, September 21, 2002 – Oceans Fair and 10th Anniversary Celebration in Monterey

From 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at Custom House Plaza. Ocean exhibits from around the nation, boat rides and tours, street performers, face painting, birthday cake, speeches by dignitaries, special hands-on children's activities including an ocean treasure hunt, puppet show and performance by children's recording artist Linda Arnold. For more information, call the Sanctuary's Monterey office at (831) 647-4255.

Saturday, September 28, 2002 – Shark Festival and 10th Anniversary Celebration in Santa Cruz

From 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at the Santa Cruz Wharf. Ocean exhibits and hands-on activities, live sharks, children's treasure hunt and puppet show, live music, birthday cake, and formal ceremonies. For more information call the Sanctuary's Santa Cruz office at (831) 420-1630.